

Pre-Natal Conditions.

BY REEA BELLE.

Now that people are beginning to awaken to the vital importance of this subject, that they are learning that the children are but the outward, living embodiment and expression of the inmost thoughts, feelings and desires of their parents, no word that will in any way induce investigation into the hidden laws that govern the subtle relation that exists between parents and offspring, between cause and effect, can come amiss.

We see parents strong and well, intellectual, of good morals, whose children might, with good reason, be expected to be models of physical beauty, and above the average in mental and moral development, frail and delicate in health and constitution, and frequently quite deficient in other respects, and we wonder at this state of things. The well-known law that "like begets like" seems to have failed in this case. Then, again, we see people whose health and bodily conditions are such as would warrant us to expect little that would be favorable, parents of healthy children, who seem to have inherited only the best of what their progenitors had to bestow. We also see children whose parents have taken special pains to bring about just such conditions as they supposed needful, sometimes decidedly inferior to others, perhaps, in the same family, where no such precautions were exercised.

These apparent contradictions are apt to confound us somewhat and make us feel that we are ignorant of what we thought we knew.

True it is that all conditions of the mother during gestation make an impression on the child according to their duration and intensity on the mind of the mother. True, also, that the mental and physical states of the father previous to the conception of the child are quite apt to be reproduced in its organization. Again, great anxiety on the part of parents to bring about a certain result in the child will be quite likely to frustrate itself, and produce an exaggerated type, deficient, maybe, in vitality, or deformed in some way. Undue anxiety, from any cause, has a tendency to develop the brain at the expense of the body, and should be always avoided by prospective parents.

There is one condition, however, before which all others bend, which will, of itself, do more toward bringing about perfection in all respects in offspring than all others combined. This may be all comprehended in a half dozen words; but is, at the same time, more difficult to attain. It is a happy, contented spirit. I do not mean the happiness of ignorance and stupidity, that has no aspirations for anything beyond the sensuous plane of existence; but the happiness that comes of intelligent self-culture. The disposition (which most of us must cultivate if we would possess it) that makes the best of everything, and seeks to draw all the sweetness and richness out of life that it can be induced to yield, every day, all the year through; and which does the best possible to make all around happy, as all reasonable effort in that direction can do. In brief: *be intelligently happy.*

All who can be thus happy, in everyday life, and who are ready, lovingly and willingly, to accept the responsibilities and privileges of parentage, may be surer of handsome, healthy, well organized children, free from warping, deforming peculiarities of mental and physical nature, even though their own health may not be perfect, or their bodily conditions or surroundings be such as would, under other circumstances, warrant their becoming parents at all, than those who, with much better apparent

advantages, cannot command the mental tranquillity which is so far-reaching in its influence and effects.

I do not mean that any laws that bear on so important a relation are by any means to be disregarded, but that a peaceful, happy spirit is a condition generally overlooked, and should always be cultivated whatever else may be left out.

SOUTH NEWBURY, Ohio, September, 1881.

Nature versus Art.

BY DR. J. H. HANAFORD.

WHILE but few are opposed to all medicine, it is unquestionably true that the less enlightened undervalue nature's remedial agents and overestimate mere drugs. It is a significant and glorious truth, that some of the more valuable remedial agents, are free to all, the poor and rich alike. And while it is true that but little or no sickness would exist in the world aside from violations of God's laws and the neglect of the conditions of health, with the most potent of nature's agents, it is as true that health may be measurably regained by *right living* in all respects. It is impossible for us to overestimate the value of air, sunlight, diet and cleanliness as therapeutic agents. We may infer this of air from the fact that God has been so lavish in the supply of it; surrounding our earth with an ocean of it to the depth of from 45 miles to 200—by recent estimates; and that from its diffusibility it is self-purifying and regulating; while the whole vegetable world, the waters, snows, ice, the sunlight and heat, alike, combine in the grand work of purification, that man and beast may have a pure element to breathe. We may safely secure an unlimited quantity.

And then the sunlight, what a grand purifier! Admit it to the damp, dark cellars, and the filth, the vermin, and the disease-germs, are scattered; cut away one half of those shade trees and the diphtherias, the croups, the malignant fevers, are wonderfully diminished. The mould recedes, gloom, irascibility and dyspepsia measurably disappear. The sun may fade the carpet, but that is not a calamity at all comparable with the fading of the bloom of health from the cheek of the young. It may admit flies, for they know too much to live in a gloomy place; but it also admits good nature, good health and many blessings.

God graciously gave us an abundance of these *natural* medicines—water, air, light and cheerfulness, and it seems foolish not to avail ourselves of them to a reasonable extent. While these can never be easily monopolized, never be kept from the poor, it is best for each man, woman and child to covet an abundance, or to appropriate an ample amount, remembering that the supply is inexhaustible and that we can never infringe upon the rights of others in our use of them.

"PLAIN HOME TALK." An old gentleman, 87 years of age, living at Grand Rapids, Mich., concludes a letter with the following paragraph:

I am reading with great interest your "Plain Home Talk," and wish the whole world had it.

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Enclosed you will find P. O. order for \$5 for which please send five volumes of "Plain Home Talk." I want these books to distribute among my friends, as I believe that ignorance of sexual physiology and the philosophy of marriage has caused the race of man more misery than the evil of intemperance.